

**Summary of the
Board of Directors Teleconference
December 13, 1996**

The Board of Directors of the National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Conference (NELAC) convened by teleconference on Friday, December 13, 1996, at 1:30 pm. The Board meeting was led by its chair, Dr. Eldert C. Hartwig, Jr., of the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services. A list of action items is provided in Attachment A. A list of participants is given in Attachment B. Materials distributed to the Board included the draft agenda (Attachment C). Additional materials provided to the Board included:

- A copy of the survey for the National Conference of State Legislators (NCSL) drafted by the Implementation Committee;
- Copies of letters from the Board to Fred Hansen (8/19/96 and 9/23/96) and Robert Huggett's reply (11/22/96);
- A copy of a letter from Belinda Collins of the National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST) to NELAC members describing the National Council for Laboratory Accreditation (NaCLA);
- Draft policy statements on a) meeting minutes, b) standards publication, and c) facilitation at interim and annual meetings; and
- the Second NELAC Interim Meeting brochure.

GENERAL ISSUES

Dr. Hartwig opened the meeting by asking for additional items to place on the agenda. During the discussion, one additional issue was suggested and included in subsequent discussions. The minutes of the previous meeting (11/13/96) were approved with slight modification.

COMMENTS ON NCSL SURVEY

Mr. Gary King, chair of the Implementation Committee, described the survey that has been drafted by his committee for distribution by the NCSL. After discussion, it was agreed that Section IV (Political Feasibility) would be reworded and condensed. It was suggested that Gene Tatsch, Research Triangle Institute (RTI) support contractor, provide a list of State NELAC members to Mr. King.

CONCERNS REGARDING EPA'S COMMITMENT TO NELAC

Further discussion of the appropriate nature and form of Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA's) commitment to NELAC was discussed. Dr. Hartwig offered to draft a statement for review by the Board. Additionally, it was noted in subsequent discussion that the provisional commitment by the Office of Water (OW) to accept NELAP accreditation could be interpreted as a positive signal.

OW POSITION ON NELAC STANDARDS

Ms. Jeanne Mourrain, NELAC director, related to the Board that the OW said it will recognize NELAC accreditation for the Drinking Water program, provided that the legal requirements are met. This was interpreted as another step in EPA's commitment to recognize NELAC's efforts in a tangible manner.

INNOVATION IN AMERICAN GOVERNMENT -- AWARD PROGRAM

Dr. Robert Stephens described for the Board the Innovation in American Government award given by the Ford Foundation and administered by the Harvard Kennedy School of Government, his experience with it, and his observations regarding NELAC's qualification for this award, especially in the area of innovative approaches in major programs. He outlined the application process and schedule and noted that recipients receive a multijurisdiction \$100,000 grant. It was the consensus of the Board that a subcommittee be formed, chaired by Dr. Stephens, to apply for the award. Ms. Carol Batterton, Ms. Mourrain, and Mr. Ted Coopwood volunteered to assist as needed.

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON LABORATORY ACCREDITATION

Dr. Belinda Collins reviewed for the Board the invitation to NELAC participants to also participate in a meeting of the National Council for Laboratory Accreditation (NaCLA) planned for January 7, 1997. Her letter highlighted the fact that NaCLA recognizes NELAC and plans to work cooperatively with NELAC. The envisioned structure and other features of the planned organization were discussed.

STATUS OF PREPARATION FOR INTERIM MEETING

Mr. Coopwood indicated that plans for the Second NELAC Interim Meeting are progressing well. The meeting announcement, including a preliminary schedule, has been completed and mailed; Mr. Coopwood will contact each of the committee chairs to draft the final schedule.

Ms. Mourrain stated that Mr. J. Wilson Hershey has informally agreed to serve as the keynote speaker for the opening plenary session, which met with the agreement of the Board. She will draft some talking points for him to consider. Dr. Hartwig will issue an invitation to Mr. Hershey to deliver the keynote address.

Subsequent discussions included the scheduling of a breakfast meeting for the Board and committee chairs during the interim meeting. Additionally, the Board agreed to invite the committee chairs to participate in the Board's next meeting on Friday, January 17, 1997. Ms. Mourrain will issue this invitation.

DRAFT POLICIES ON MEETING MINUTES, STANDARDS, AND FACILITATION

Ms. Mourrain reviewed the draft policy statements with the Board. The Board adopted these

three initial policy statements with minor modifications. Ms Mourrain will circulate them to the committee chairs for their comments prior to final adoption.

DATABASE COMMITTEE NOMINEES

Several nominees for this committee have been identified by several members of the Board. Dr. Hartwig will draft a charge to this committee. He encouraged the members to forward any suggestions, including names and phone numbers, to Mr. Coopwood no later than December 20. He will then meet with Ms. Mourrain and Mr. Coopwood to review the list of candidates for possible appointment to this new committee.

ACCREDITATION PROCESS COMMITTEE -- RESIGNATION OF PAUL SCHUDA

Dr. Hartwig informed the Board that Dr. Paul Schuda has reluctantly resigned his chairmanship of the Accreditation Process Committee due to a change in his job responsibilities. Ms. Marge Prevost has been elected Acting Chair by the committee.

FEDERAL PARTNERS

Mr. Coopwood reviewed for the Board the status of the Federal Partners Committee, a group of federal NELAC Voting Members. In preparation for the interim meeting, a meeting of this committee has been set for Wednesday, January 15, 1997, to discuss the revised Chapter 1 of the standards.

BRIEFINGS TO EPA REGION 9 AND REGION 5 STATES

Mr. Coopwood reviewed for the Board his encouraging teleconference regarding NELAC's status and the potential impact envisioned on the OW's water quality program and the plans for recognizing National Environmental Laboratory Accreditation Program (NELAP) accreditation.

BROCHURE ON NELAC -- EDUCATION AND OUTREACH COMMITTEE

Dr. Hartwig related that he receives frequent calls from individuals requesting introductory materials about NELAC. A general information tool is needed, as well as a more specific publication that can be used specifically to inform inquirers about NELAC. Ms. Batterton noted that the Education and Outreach Committee developed a series of fact sheets. Dr. Hartwig will contact Dr. Volz regarding a more comprehensive brochure.

PRIVATIZATION OF RADON PROGRAM COMPONENTS

Ms. Mourrain reviewed plans by the Office of Radiation and Indoor Air (ORIA) to pursue privatization of mitigators and proficiency testing (PT) components of the radon program. They are characterizing the present program, as well as identifying options for its future. Ed Chu of ORIA will be invited to discuss the Radon Program at a later Board meeting.

NEXT TELECONFERENCE

The next scheduled teleconference of this Board is Friday, January 17, 1997, at 1:30 pm Eastern Standard Time (EST). An additional teleconference is scheduled for Friday, February 21, 1997 at 1:30 pm.

ACTION ITEMS
Board of Directors Teleconference
December 13, 1996

ACTION	Date Completed
Gene Tatsch will provide a list of State NELAC members to Mr. King.	
Dr. Hartwig will draft a statement on EPA's commitment to NELAC for review by the Board.	
Mr. Coopwood will contact each of the committee chairs to draft the final schedule.	
Dr. Hartwig will invite Mr. Hershey to deliver the keynote address at the Second NELAC Interim Meeting.	
Ms. Mourrain will circulate the draft policies on meeting minutes, standards, and facilitation to the committee chairs for their comments.	
Dr. Hartwig will draft a charge for the <i>ad hoc</i> database committee.	
Board members should forward suggestions for members of the <i>ad hoc</i> database committee, including names and phone numbers, to Mr. Coopwood no later than December 20.	
Dr. Hartwig, Ms. Mourrain, and Mr. Coopwood will meet to review the list of candidates for making appointments to the new <i>ad hoc</i> database committee.	
Mr. Coopwood will distribute the revised Chapter 1 of the standards to members of the Federal Partners Committee in preparation for their January 13, 1997, meeting.	
Dr. Hartwig will have the NELAC introductory brochure edited by Mike Volz for possible inclusion in the NCSL mailing.	
Ms. Mourrain will request that all committee chairs participate in the next Board meeting.	

**LIST OF PARTICIPANTS
Board of Directors Teleconference
December 13, 1996**

Name	Affiliation	Phone Numbers
Charles Hartwig, Chair	FL Department of Health & Rehabilitative Services	T: 904/791-1550 F: 904/791-1567 E: hartwic@hrs.state.fl.us
Joe Aiello	NJ Dept of Environmental Protection	T: 609/633-3840 F: 609/777-1774 E: jaiello@dep.state.nj.us
Carol Batterton, Chair Elect	TX Natural Resources Conservation Commission	T: 512/239-6300 F: 512/239-6307 E: cbattert@smtpgate.tnrcc.state.tx
Pauline Bouchard	MN Dept of Health	T: 612/623-5331 F: 612/623-5514 E: pauline.bouchard@health.state.mn.us
Charles Brokopp	UT Division of Laboratory Services	T: 801/584-8406 F: 801/584-8486 E: cbrokopp@state.ut.us
Belinda Collins	NIST, Office of Standards Services	T: 301/975-4000 F: 301/963-2871 E: bcollins@nist.gov
Ted Coopwood, NELAC Executive Secretary	USEPA	T: 202/233-9358 F: 202/233-9651 E: coopwood.theodore@epamail.epa.gov
Marcia Davies	US Army Corps of Engineers	T: 402/697-2555 F: 402/697-2595 E: marciadavies@usace.army.mil
Gary King, Chair Implementation Committee	NM State Legislature	T: 505/872-3508 F: 505/872- E:
Jeanne Mourrain, NELAC Director	USEPA	T: 919/541-1120 F: 919/541-4101 E: mourrain.jeanne@epamail.epa.gov
Bob Stephens, Past Chair	CA-EPA	T: 510/540-3003 F: 510/540-2305 E: rds3@ix.netcom.com
Gene Tatsch, Support Contractor	Research Triangle Institute	T: 919/541-6930 F: 919/541-7386 E: cet@rti.org

AGENDA
Board of Directors Teleconference
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1. Comments on NCSL survey¹ - *Gary King*
2. Board's concerns regarding EPA's commitment to NELAC² - *Charles Hartwig*
3. Office of Water position on NELAC standards - *Jeanne Mourrain*
4. Innovation in American Government - Award program - *Bob Stephens*
5. National Council on Laboratory Accreditation (NaCLA)³ - *Belinda Collins*
6. Status of standards for Interim Meeting - *Ted Coopwood*
7. Policies on meetings' minutes, standards, and facilitation⁴ - *Jeanne*
8. Database committee nominees - *Charles, Jeanne and Ted*
9. Accreditation Process Committee - resignation of Paul Schuda - *Charles*
10. Federal Partners - interaction and plans - *Jeanne and Ted*
11. Briefings to EPA Region 9 and Region 5 states - *Ted*

¹ See attached survey

² See attached letters from Hartwig to Hansen, and response from Huggett

³ See attached letter

⁴ See attached - 3 policy statements for review by Board